



Mayor's Office, City of Houston

Office of International Affairs & Development

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## Message from the Director

May was a tremendous month for Houston on the international front, beginning with the world-renowned 2005 Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) that had a record number of attendees. We were also privileged to host other high-profile conferences, symposia, and visiting high-level delegations from Europe, Asia, Canada, and from our U.S. Ambassadors to the ASEAN nations. I would like to thank you all for your kind words, thoughts, advice, vital feedback and most of all, your support. We all hope to continue to hearing from you on enhancing our quality of international life in Houston.



*Helen T. Chang*

**Helen T. Chang**

**Director of International Affairs & Development**

## Houston-Canada: Enter the Global Partnership

Houston and Calgary have a great deal in common. Both are known as the 'Energy Capital' of their respective countries. Both cities have a very strong "can-do" and entrepreneurial spirit that stems from our frontier heritage and pioneering legacy.

It is in this shared history and a joint vision for the future that our cities affirmed with the signing at City Hall of the "Bilateral Partnership for Business and Cultural Growth and Cooperation" in the areas of engineering, aerospace, education, life sciences and the arts. Joining Houston Councilmember and Vice Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Goldberg on May 3, 2005, for the signing was Calgary Deputy Mayor Craig Burrows and the Calgary Economic Development delegation: President and CEO Bruce Graham, Investment and Trade Development Vice President Clark Grue, and International Business Manager Karen Fosado. The City of Houston is honored to formally call Calgary a strategic partner city and we look forward to building on this historic relationship. – **By David Chang**



*Calgary Deputy Mayor Craig Burrows (left) and Councilmember and Vice Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Goldberg (right) signed the first Canadian-Houston partnership agreement.*

## May 2005 Highlights

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### An Ocean of Knowledge: Technology Conference Spurs Development



*2005 Offshore  
Technology Conference.*

The annual Offshore Technology Conference was held May 2-5 at the Reliant Center. More than 50,000 attendees gathered in sessions that focused on the sustainability of the offshore oil industry's success. The theme for the conference, "a sea of resources; an ocean of knowledge," also reflects the wealth of new ideas and technologies presented at the conference. Industry leaders from 110 countries enjoyed Houston's vibrant cultural offerings as they attended seminars, learned of new technologies and products, and exchanged ideas.

The Offshore Technology Conference ranks among the largest trade shows held annually in the United States and is among the 10 largest meetings in terms of attendance. The conference is held annually in May at Reliant Center at Reliant Park in Houston. For more information about the Offshore Technology Conference (OTC), please visit [www.otcnet.org](http://www.otcnet.org). – **By Derek Huang**

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### 2005 International Air Cargo Conference

As one of America's fastest growing cities, Houston witnesses hundreds of trade interactions every day. An integral component of Houston's trade dealings is the Houston Airport System, the fourth largest airport system in the United States. In 2004 alone, 782 million pounds of air cargo passed through Houston, a new record for the system.



*2005 International Air Cargo  
Conference.*

May 17 through May 19, Houston hosted the *2005 International Air Cargo Conference* at the George R. Brown Convention Center. The panel of over 100 exhibitors included many major companies and organizations that span the globe: Siemens, UPS, and Continental Airlines, etc. The conference gave leading professionals an opportunity to focus on topics such as security, the growth of air cargo, and global trade. Speakers discussed measures both airports and airlines could take in order to prevent possible terrorist attacks. Of these measures, the use of anti-missile technology has become one of the hot debates.

"The conference gave Houston the great opportunity to showcase our airport facilities and the advantages our region offers to the air cargo industry," said Richard Vacar, Director of Aviation for the Houston Airport System. - **By Ramin Naderi**



## Sino-U.S. Symposium

In an effort to promote international cooperation between U.S. and Chinese financial institutions and businesses, the 2005 Symposium on Sino-U.S. Financial Cooperation and Enterprise Development was held on May 13-15 at the Intercontinental Hotel, Houston. The event focused on issues such as the modernization of banking systems, the development of capital markets, and the role of banking institutions in promoting business and economic growth. The symposium was an excellent opportunity to prepare for the economic reforms to be enacted in China in 2006 as it joins the WTO and opens “its doors to international competition in the financial markets, bringing unprecedented opportunities and challenges.”



*The Sino-U.S. Symposium drew official delegation from cities of China.*

This “meeting of the minds” brought together leaders from both countries as they exchanged ideas and built lasting relationships. The event was organized by MetroBank, N.A. and the Chinese Association of Professionals in Science. Councilmember and Vice Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Goldberg gave opening remarks at the conference whose attendees included delegations from cities in China such as Ningbo, Xiamen, Fushun, Yanji and others.

– **By Robert Dahnke**

## Ambassador Tour



*(From left to right) The Hon. Ralph L. (Skip) Boyce, U.S. Ambassador to Malaysia; The Hon. Christopher LaFleur, U.S. Ambassador to Malaysia; The Hon. Lynn Pascoe, U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia; The Hon. Michael Marine, U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam met with Mayor Bill White.*

Newly appointed U.S. Ambassadors to Southeast Asian nations visited Houston on May 19 as part of the 2005 U.S. Ambassadors Tour. The tour, coordinated by the U.S.-ASEAN Business Council, is an opportunity for high-level interaction to aid the Ambassadors and their Senior Commercial Officers in gaining a better understanding of U.S. business interests in Southeast Asia. The tour also aims to increase public awareness of the importance of U.S.-ASEAN relations.

As part of the Tour’s stop in Houston, the U.S. Ambassadors to Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, as well as the Consul General of Indonesia and Honorary Consul of Thailand met with Mayor Bill White. The leaders discussed economic development and challenges presented by the ASEAN countries.

The U.S. Ambassadors Tour is an annual event sponsored by American companies and coordinated by the U.S.-ASEAN Business Council. The U.S.-ASEAN Business Council is

dedicated to effectively strengthening bilateral and U.S.-ASEAN relations through strong economic and commercial ties. The Council is committed to promoting U.S. competitiveness in the most dynamic global growth market: the ASEAN region. – **By Robert Dahnke**

## Houston-China's Era of Friendship and Partnership

有朋自遠方來，不亦悅乎！

May marked another meeting between east and west as several delegations of officials from cities of China made visits to Houston. On May 19, 2005, Vice Mayor He Min of Dalian, China, met with Houston City Councilmember and Vice Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Goldberg to discuss increased cooperation between Dalian and Houston, especially in the area of medical and information technology. Houston, as home to the largest medical center in the world, is in a leading position to confront challenges that arise in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Deputy Chairman Sun Zhaohua of China's State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs (SAFEA) met with International Affairs and Development Director Helen Chang on May 25. The SAFEA is responsible for administration concerning experts from abroad as well as sending Chinese professionals overseas for training. The meeting reflected the expanding opportunities for the exchange of technology and expertise between China and Houston.

On May 26, 2005, Vice Mayor Yang Dongliang of Tianjin, China, met with International Affairs and Development Director Helen Chang to discuss opportunities and partnership between Tianjin and Houston, especially in the petrochemical industrial sector. The visits not only highlighted the long-term friendship between Houston and cities of China, but also the promising future partnership. – **By Robert Dahnke**



*Vice Mayor He Min (left) and Councilmember and Vice Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Goldberg (right).*



*The E.U. delegation (with members representing the international economic development and journalism fields of Denmark, Germany, Lithuania, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden, and Macedonia) and Director Helen Chang are looking forward to future exchanges between the City of Houston and European Union.*

## European Union: A Global Converse

The Mayor's Office of International Affairs & Development was honored to receive a 7-person European Union Trade and Economic Development delegation in City Hall on May 19, 2005.

The E.U. delegation, under the auspices of the U.S. State Department's "International Visitor Leadership Program," were particularly interested in learning from Helen T. Chang, director of Mayor's Office of International Affairs & Development (MOIAD) about how the MOIAD assists our citizens and Houston-area companies in developing international trade ties, and how we promote Houston nationally and internationally. During the meeting, Director Helen Chang gave an overview of Houston, the MOIAD duties and cited case-specific examples of assistance to companies that are expanding overseas, and engaged in a informative Q&A session with the E.U. delegation. Everyone acknowledged the need to maintain dialogue and understanding at various levels between the United States and our partners in the European Union.

– **By David Chang**

## Upcoming Major Events



*Rabat City, Morocco.*

### His Excellency the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to Houston

His Excellency the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco Aziz Mekouar will visit Houston in late June, 2005. During his stay in Houston, Ambassador Mekouar will meet with Houston officials to discuss future business opportunities for Houston and Morocco. In addition to the courtesy visit, Ambassador Mekouar will meet with the Houston Chamber of Commerce and local business leaders.

Recently, Morocco has undertaken measures to increase foreign investment, including the signing of a free trade agreement with the United States in 2004. Current trade between Morocco and the United States accounts for 4% of Moroccan exports and 4.1% of American exports. With his visit, his Excellency seeks to increase trade and to build an even stronger relationship between the Kingdom of Morocco and the United States. – **By Anna Valkovich**

#### Did You Know?

The Free Trade Agreement with Morocco signed by the United States in 2004 will allow for 95% of the two-way trade of consumer and industrial products between the two countries to be without tariffs. As a result of the agreement, an increase in trade is expected.

## American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin 2005 Annual Convention



The American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) annual convention will be held in Houston from June 15 through June 20 at the Hilton Americas. More than three thousand physicians of Indian origin will be attending the convention.

AAPI has been recognized as the second largest physician organization after the American Medical Association. Over the past two decades it has played a pivotal role in addressing the concerns of international medical graduates and has influenced several regional and national policies, AAPI also has established more than 30 charitable clinics in the United States and abroad.

– **By American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin**

#### Special Thanks

*Article submitted by the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin.*





*The U.S. Pavilion at World Expo 2005.*

## World Expo 2005: Texas on the Global Stage

Driverless shuttles, electro-magnetically powered trains, hybrid buses – this is not a scene from some futuristic movie but rather typical transportation at the 2005 World Exposition in Aichi Prefecture, Japan. The World EXPO 2005, which opened on March 25, 2005, brings together the nations of the world to explore the Earth's future. In a 5-month period, an estimated 15 million people will visit the exposition that features exhibits from 120 different countries, including a U.S. Pavilion. Among the

visitors will be business and political leaders from around the world. What better audience for a showcase of Houston's economic, technological and cultural accomplishments?

August 1 through August 3 have been designated "Texas Days" in the U.S. Pavilion at the exposition. A delegation led by the Office of the Governor, joined by delegates from Texas cities, will travel to Aichi to foster economic development and global partnership in the region. The delegation will not only participate in Texas activities at the pavilion, but also attend meetings to promote development in specific areas such as technology and tourism. The 2005 World EXPO in Japan is a golden opportunity to demonstrate Texas to the international community as a world-class destination.

- **By Robert Dahnke**



*The U.S. Pavilion is filled by evolution and innovation, themed "The Franklin Spirit."*

### Did You Know?

The total cost of EXPO 2005 is estimated to be 240 billion yen or about 3.3 billion U.S. dollars. The emphasis of the expo is to be placed upon the future cooperation between humans and nature. Working towards this goal, organizers even developed a 3,500 m<sup>2</sup> wall filled with over 200 varieties of plants called BioLung.

## U.S.-Arab Economic Forum (USAEF)

This September, heads of state, top business leaders, educators and technology practitioners will venture to Houston to participate in the second U.S.-Arab Economic Forum (USAEF). The forum, scheduled for September 14-16, is an opportunity for the world's most influential business, social and technology leaders to trade ideas, share experiences, and optimize the economic and trade relations between the U.S. and the Arab community.

The forum is also an opportunity for Houston to highlight its reputation as an international city. The distinguished membership of the Host Committee includes T.H. George H.W. Bush, Mayor Bill White, T.H. Robert Eckels, and other leaders from the local community. According to Mr. Nijad Fares, prominent Houston businessman and chairman of the USAEF 2005 Host Committee, the event is also "an opportunity for medium-sized businesses

### Did You Know?

U.S.-Arab bilateral trade exceeds \$55 billion annually. While United States investment in the Arab World exceeds \$70 billion, investment from Arab countries in the U.S. exceeds \$200 billion!

that wouldn't normally have access to the Middle East market." Over 2,000 leaders from business and government are expected to attend the event. With objectives of promoting stronger economic and commercial ties between the United States and the Arab community, exploring new innovations, and forging public-private partnerships for success in the new global economy, this forum encompasses many significant aspects of U.S.-Arab economic relations. For more information about the forum, please visit [www.usaeforum.org](http://www.usaeforum.org).

- **By Robert Dahnke**

## Meet the Consular Corps in Houston

# Chile

*This month, we return to South America to speak with the Honorable Carlos Charme, Consul General of Chile in Houston, who discussed the friendly atmosphere of Houston and the city's promising relations with Chile.*



*Consul General Carlos Charme*

Consul General Charme has been the Chilean Consul General in Houston for two and half years. The Consulate, which works with Texas as well as five other Southern states, has been operating in Houston for over 30 years. Of the 5,000 Chileans living in these states, 1,500 live in the Houston area.

Houston is a “modern and interesting” *big* city full of very friendly people, said Consul General Charme. The Houston-Chile relationship lies on the focal role of the Port of Houston as an “important point of entry for Chilean products,” not just to the Southern states but also to the Central and Northern regions of the United States.



*The Andes Mountains, Chile*

One of the Consulate's highest priorities is to increase trade between Houston and Chile. Already, Chile's exports to Houston, mostly in copper and timber,

are valued at half a billion dollars, with total trade valued at over one billion dollars. At the same time, Chile's imports from Houston, comprised mostly of machinery and oil products, make this two-way commerce extremely important to both Houston and Chile.



*Map of Chile*

Consul General Charme sees great potential for the growth of relations, especially in the trade sector. A Free Trade Agreement between the United States and Chile, signed in 2004, has given the United States and the Port of Houston a “level of competitiveness” never seen before. There is also a “big space to improve commerce” in areas such as wine, produce and timber. In fact, much of the produce Houstonians enjoy in the winter is from Chile!

– By Anna Valkovich

### Did You Know?

Various theories speculate on the origin of the name *Chile*. Theoretical origins include variants of the name *Tili*, a historical tribal leader, or *tshili*, the Aimara word for “snow.”

## International Hub: Houston International Protocol Alliance

For more than 20 years the Houston International Protocol Alliance has served Houston on matters of protocol and international affairs. As a division of the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Protocol Alliance is the City of Houston's office of protocol and international relations.



*Deanea K. LeFlore,  
director of the  
Houston International  
Protocol Alliance*

Having a professional protocol staff maintains consistency in the municipality's international relations and ensures that visiting international government officials are afforded courtesies appropriate to their rank, while promoting a positive image of Houston. The Protocol Alliance also serves as the City's official liaison to the Consular Corps. With 82

consulates in the Houston area, the office works to advise and assist consular officials in their interactions with the Houston community, with the

goal of making the Houston tenure of these officials as productive and pleasant as possible. The office also maintains the Consular Task Force, which lobbies for the establishment of new consulates.

Houston has 16 sister cities throughout the world. The Protocol Alliance administers the sister city program on behalf of the City of Houston and serves as a liaison to the national governing organization, Sister Cities International. The office also administers the City's Partners Agreement program, which allows Houston to develop special relationships with international cities in fields such as medicine, trade, education and culture.

The Protocol Alliance works with the State Department, Secret Service, Houston Police Department, the Houston Airport System, Houston's non-profit organizations, corporations and other organizations to arrange well-coordinated visits for the more than 200 international government officials who visit Houston on official business each year.

The Protocol Alliance is here to help you with:

- Information on a consulate or a consular corps directory;
- Questions regarding international protocol, customs or cross-cultural communication;
- Information on Houston's sister cities or sister city activities;
- Renting international flags or questions on how to appropriately display flags;
- Planning or coordinating an international event;
- Planning the visit of an international government dignitary. Depending on the visitor's rank and the amount of advance notice, the Protocol Alliance may be able to extend one or more of the city's official courtesies.

### Houston's Sister Cities:

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates  
Baku, Azerbaijan  
Chiba, Japan  
Grampian Region, Scotland  
Guayaquil, Ecuador  
Huelva, Spain  
Istanbul, Turkey  
Leipzig, Germany  
Luanda, Angola  
Nice, France  
Perth, Australia  
Shenzhen, People's Republic of China  
Stavanger, Norway  
Taipei, Taiwan  
Tampico, México  
Tyumen, Russia

### Special Thanks

*Article submitted by the Houston  
International Protocol Alliance.*



## International Frontier – Jim C. Kollaer

*Every month we focus upon a Houstonian who has made an indelible mark on our city through outstanding contributions and service to the growth of Houston as an international city.*



*Jim C. Kollaer*

Jim Kollaer is certainly no stranger to the growth and the transformation of Houston, having seen it all from the perspective of an architect, real estate broker, and as the president and CEO of the Greater Houston Partnership. Mr. Kollaer wanted to share some of his insights and experiences with our readers.

### Native Texan

Born in Amarillo, he was raised and educated in the Texas Panhandle, earning his architecture degree from Texas Tech University. When he came to Houston in 1975, the city was in the midst of a real estate recession, and a few years away from the oil bust. Working in the real-estate field throughout the difficult 1980's, he saw firsthand on the effects of a metropolitan area staked upon a singular industry.

### Houston Today

For the past fifteen years, Mr. Kollaer has devoted himself at the Partnership. Despite the economic downturn and all the challenges, Mr. Kollaer tirelessly took on an active role in guiding Houston on the path of economic recovery. While misconceptions continue to linger about Houston, he takes great pride in not only the city per se, but also all the Houstonians, who have shared the same beliefs in the city's potential and promoted

Houston to our many visitors, transplants in the energy, aerospace, medical fields and to our 82-member Consular Corps. Today, with Mr. Kollaer's endless efforts and leadership, Houston is known as a truly international city.

### Diversity

As the city's economy continued to diversify, Mr. Kollaer stresses that we as Houstonians remain the key to meeting the challenges the metropolitan area faces in the next quarter century. "We expect Houston to grow by another 3 million people in the next 20 to 25 years," he said with excitement in his voice, "How do we make them feel at home? Along with expanding our service infrastructure and increasing our quality-of-life, I truly believe that maintaining a skilled and educated workforce, along with the many resources of our diverse population, are the foundations to our future."

### A City of Opportunities and Possibilities

As for his parting thoughts? "We are positioned to be one of the most outstanding international cities in the next quarter century," he confidently stated, "we are very much on the right track!"

– By David Chang

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**Next Submission Deadline:  
June 20, 2005**

## June - 2005 Event Calendar

Date	Time	Event	Venue/Contact
June 2	6:30pm	Interfaith Ministries: The Summer Spiritual Gathering for Women of Faith	Venue: Eighth Church of Christ Scientists Contact: lkeels@imggh.org
June 3	8:00am-9:00am	Houston Technology Center: Tech Champs Meeting	Venue: HTC Contact: 713-658-1750
June 3	Noon-1:00pm	Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce: Ambassador Meeting	Venue: 3401 Corder Street Contact: 713-644-7010
June 4	6:30pm	Houston World Trade Center: 2005 World Trade Gala	Venue: Intercontinental Hotel Contact: 713-844-3639
June 4	10:00am-5:00pm	Transtar Business Development: Tapioca Expo 2005	Venue: Southern Chinese Daily News Building Contact: 832-259-2448
June 7-14	--	US Commercial Service: Trade Mission to Oil & Gas Asia	Venue: Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Hanoi Contact: 281-449-9402
June 7	4:00pm-6:00pm	American Institute of Architects Houston: Geotechnical, Forensic and Environmental Issues with Houston Buildings	Venue: KOCH Building Contact: 713-520-0155
June 8-10	--	Asia Society: 15 <sup>th</sup> Asian Corporate Conference	Venue: Shangri-La Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand Contact: 212-327-9340
June 8	9:00am-noon	Japan-America Society of Houston, Inc.: Underwriter's Cup, Golf Tournament	Venue: Black Horse Golf Club Contact: 713-963-0121
June 8	11:30am-1:00pm	Asian Chamber of Commerce: Setting Up Corporations & Other Limited Liability Entities monthly luncheon	Venue: Westin Galleria Hotel Contact: 713-782-7222
June 9	6:00pm-7:30pm	Houston World Affairs Council: Liberty for Latin America, How to Undo Five Hundred Years of State Oppression	Venue: The Westin Oaks Hotel Contact: 713-522-7811
June 8	11:30am-1:00pm	The Asian Chamber of Commerce: Setting Up Corporations & Other Limited Liability Entities" monthly luncheon	Venue: Westin Galleria Hotel Contact: 713-782-7222
June 10 & 11	2:00pm and 7:30pm	Japan Expo: Noh Performance	Venue: George R. Brown Convention Center Contact: 213-617-0868
June 11- June 18	--	Asia Society Washington D.C.: Tradition and Heritage, Views of Thailand and Cambodia Tour	Venue: Bangkok, Ayuthaya, Chiang Mai, and Siem Reap Contact: 202-833-2742
June 11	8:00pm	Indo-American Association: Bombay an East-West Fusion	Venue: Wortham Center Contact: 281-648-0422

June 11	--	Asian American Real Estate Association: Home Buyer Fair	Venue: Sharpstown Community Center Contact: 713-865-9060
June 12	5:30pm-7:00pm	The Houston Members of the Leadership Texas Alumnae Association: Reception	Venue: The Rainbow Lodge Contact: 713-520-1399
June 13	noon	The Houston Members of the Leadership Texas Alumnae Association: Luncheon	Venue: Greenway II (Renaissance Hotel) Contact: 713-520-1399
June 13	6:30pm	The Houston Members of the Leadership Texas Alumnae Association: Dinner	Venue: Hobby Center Contact: 713-520-1399
June 15-20	--	American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin: Annual Convention	Venue: Hilton Americas Hotel Contact: 713-626-2148
June 15	7:30am-9:00am	Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce: Networking Breakfast & Mini-Trade Fair	Venue: Hess Club Contact: 713-644-7070
June 15	6:30pm-7:30pm	Houston World Affairs Council: Three Billion New Capitalists	Venue: The Junior League Contact: 713-522-7811
June 19	--	Juneteenth Celebration	Venue: Hermann Park Contact: 713-284-8350
June 17	11:30am-1:30pm	Houston World Affairs Council: Immigration by The Hon. John Cornyn	Venue: Hyatt Regency Hotel Contact: 713-522-7811
June 17	6:30pm	Harvard University Club of Houston: lavish Gala	Venue: Intercontinental Hotel Contact: 713-529-7800
June 21	5:30pm-8:00pm	Success in the City: Launch of Laptops and Lace 2005	Venue: Dave and Busters Contact: 281-391-2636
June 21	6:00pm-7:30pm	Houston World Affairs Council: An African Perspective on Globalization and International Trade	Venue: The Junior League Contact: 713-522-7811
June 22	5:30pm-7:30pm	Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce: After-Hours Networking	Venue: 2401 Fondren Contact: 713-644-7070
June 24	7:00am-9:00am	Houston Technology Center: "Sales Force Strategies for Start-ups" seminar	Venue: HTC Contact: 713-658-1750
June 24	Noon-1:30pm	Houston Hispanic of Commerce: Ambassador Meeting	Venue: Wells Fargo Contact: 713-644-7070
June 30	Noon-1:00pm	Houston International Protocol Alliance: Learn at Lunch - Peru	Venue: Visitors Center Theater Contact: Houston International Protocol Alliance 713-227-3395

*We have one simple goal: to promote Houston as a renowned international city.*

The contents are intended for general information purposes only.